Father, Glorify Thy Name

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"Now is my soul troubled; and what shall I say? Father, save me from this hour: but for this cause came I unto this hour. Father, glorify thy name. Then came there a voice from heaven, saying, I have both glorified it, and will glorify it again."

John 12:27-28

Introduction:

1. The passage we want to explore for the Father's glory in Jesus Christ is John 12:20-36. Guide us, great God.
2. I will tell you in advance that my favorite words of this passage are these: "Father, glorify thy name."
3. For those who love John 17, properly our Lord's prayer and one of the most spiritual chapters, enjoy this!
4. With the Lord's Supper tonight, we want to prepare our hearts by considering His trouble and death for us.
5. The setting is a few days before our Lord's final Passover, Agony, Crucifixion, Resurrection, and Coronation.
6. The setting is just after raising Lazarus from the dead and triumphantly entering Jerusalem (John 12:1-19).
7. Jews and Gentile proselytes were arriving from everywhere to worship in Jerusalem and keep the Passover.
8. Jehovah sent Jesus Christ of Nazareth to manifest God's own glory to the universe by our free redemption!

12:20 And there were certain Greeks among them that came up to worship at the feast:

A. The feast under view here is the Feast of the Passover, during which Jesus Christ would be crucified.

B. Greeks, or Gentiles, were allowed to worship in Jerusalem, as the Ethiopian eunuch (Acts 8:27).

C. It is important to remember that Gentiles had no hope and were without God in the world, which is primarily a description of their practical condition outside the commonwealth of Israel (Ep 2:11-12).

12:21 The same came therefore to Philip, which was of Bethsaida of Galilee, and desired him, saying, Sir, we would see Jesus.

A. These Greeks desired to see Jesus, and they solicited Philip to obtain permission from the Master.

B. Being Gentiles, this raised a problem, for the Lord had said to avoid Gentiles (Matthew 10:6; 15:24).

C. What is your ambition? The longing of your heart? The greatest priority of your soul? To see Jesus?

12:22 Philip cometh and telleth Andrew: and again Andrew and Philip tell Jesus.

A. Due to the complexity of the matter, Philip tells Andrew about the request, and the two tell Jesus.

B. Praise to His holy name, there is no complexity for Gentiles to come to Jesus Christ (Eph 2:13-22).

C. By the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, there is no longer Jew, Gentile, or Greek (Gal 3:28; Col 3:11).

12:23 And Jesus answered them, saying, The hour is come, that the Son of man should be glorified.

A. These words must be understood in the context of answering a request for an audience with Gentiles.
   1. His answer is indirect, for He did not say whether He would or would not see these Greeks.
   2. His answer is indirect, but it implies the great glory of the Son of man in saving the Gentiles.
   3. There were many prophecies of Messiah's salvation of Gentiles (Is 11:10; 42:1-7; 60:1-3; etc.).

B. Therefore, the glorification of the Son of man is our Lord's reference to His approaching death, resurrection, ascension, and glorification, which would result in many Gentiles being saved.
   1. He had already taught that He must bring many sheep of the Gentiles into one fold (John 10:16).
   2. John had recorded Caiaphas's prophecy that Jesus would die for the Gentiles (John 11:49-52).
   3. Jesus was not glorified until He finished the work of redemption and rose to God's right hand.
   4. The great mystery of godliness includes all these works of Christ for the Gentiles (I Tim 3:16).
   5. Jesus Christ was glorified by conversion of the Gentiles and kingdom expansion (Rom 15:8-12).

C. Do not be confused! The glory of Jesus Christ and the glory of God are the same! For God sent Jesus Christ to display His glory, and the glory of Jesus Christ redounds to the glory of God.

D. Do not be confused! The glory of Jesus Christ was found in His magnificent death, His victory over sin and death, His resurrection, His ascension to heaven, His coronation there, and His gifts to men.

12:24 Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone: but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit.

A. The Son of Man, Jesus Christ the Messiah, was about to be glorified, but He would have to die first.

B. Jesus declared the great truth of the similarity between His death and the planting of a wheat seed.

C. The English word "corn" can mean a grain, seed, or particle of most anything. Here it is a seed.

D. Until a seed falls into the ground and dies by losing its form and identity, there will be no harvest.
   1. However, a dying seed in the ground will bring forth many more like it in the new wheat plant.
   2. The reproductive power of wheat is approximately 400 to 1 for each wheat seed that is planted.

E. In the same way, the death of Jesus Christ would result in the great harvest of souls to eternal life.
   1. The great God predestinated men to eternal life by Christ to provide many brethren (Rom 8:29).
   2. The glory of Christ is the great result of His death in bringing many sons to glory (Heb 2:9-10)!
   3. The death of Jesus was required for the great host in heaven (Is 53:10-12; Rev 5:9-14; 7:9-17).

F. We remember the death of our Lord as a sad event, but its fruit is glory and salvation for very many.

12:25 He that loveth his life shall lose it; and he that hateth his life in this world shall keep it unto life eternal.

A. We saw this rule of the kingdom elsewhere, but it has a purpose here (Matt 10:39; Luke 9:20-25).

B. Having just stated His own intent to die for the glory of God, Jesus exhorted His hearers to the same; and knowing what the apostles and disciples would face in persecution, He encouraged them to it.

C. If you love life in this world, you will be disappointed here and lose eternal life in the world to come.

D. If you hate life in this world, you will be most happy here and you will obtain eternal life in the next.

E. The glory of God, which Jesus desired above all things, requires the sacrifice of everything else.

F. When you forsake things for the glory of Jesus Christ, you never lose here or there (Mark 10:28-30).

12:26 If any man serve me, let him follow me; and where I am, there shall also my servant be: if any man serve me, him will my Father honour.

A. The verb "follow" here must be more than mere discipleship or service, or it would be redundant.
   1. If a man serves another, he is following him, in the sense of serving, but there is more intended.
   2. The issue in context is the sacrifice of life in this world for the glory of God and eternal life.
   3. The true servants of Jesus Christ have no regard for their lives here, but choose death to the flesh.
   4. The following here, by context, is following Jesus Christ in sacrifice, suffering, and even death.
   5. Jesus had made bearing your cross daily to be a mark of following Him (Luke 9:23; 14:26-27).

B. The reward of giving your life for Jesus Christ is to inherit heaven and spend eternity with Him.
   1. It is a fair trade to be blessed in this life and receive eternal life and heaven (Mark 10:28-30).
   2. Jesus Christ proved His deity by using the present tense to describe His presence both in heaven and on earth, which is a similar construction to John 3:13, which modern Bible versions corrupt!

C. It is a great thing to be such a servant of Christ – God will specially honor them (John 14:21-23)!
   1. Paul was confident God had a crown of righteousness for his service to Christ (II Tim 4:6-8).
   2. The Lord promised many rewards to those who would overcome in serving Him (Rev 2:7; etc.).

12:27 Now is my soul troubled; and what shall I say? Father, save me from this hour: but for this cause came I unto this hour.

A. Our Lord's soul was troubled – sore amazed, very heavy, and exceedingly sorrowful in human fear and grief – facing the cross and the burden of our sins, yet without sin (Matt 26:38; Mark 14:33-34).

B. Have you ever felt grief or sorrow so you could not describe it or speak of it? It was less than His!

C. In your greatest fear and grief, there is only one solution – go to God in prayer (Ps 109:4; James 5:3).

D. Here in other words are the Saviour's prayer in Gethsemane, "O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me: nevertheless not as I will, but as thou wilt" (Matt 26:39). See Hebrews 5:7-9.

E. The great goal of Jesus of Nazareth was the glory of God, even if it meant voluntarily dying for you!

F. So great was His faith to do the will of God, He laid down His life for God (Hebrews 10:5-10).

12:28 Father, glorify thy name. Then came there a voice from heaven, saying, I have both glorified it, and will glorify it again.

A. By the context, we know exactly what Jesus requested – God to receive glory from His death; God to glorify Himself through His Son's death; God to magnify Himself by the coming crucifixion.

B. Here are other words to help us understand these words: "nevertheless not as I will, but as thou wilt."

C. Responding to His prayer, God thundered from heaven with a voice stating His glory in Jesus Christ.

D. God had already glorified His name in the life of the Lord Jesus Christ and the related events of it.
   1. He had glorified His name by the angelic host at the birth of His Son by a virgin (Luke 2:8-14).
   2. He had glorified His name in Jesus Christ at His baptism, when He thundered His approval.
   3. He had glorified His name in Jesus Christ at His transfiguration, when He revealed His glory.
   4. He had glorified His name by the pure doctrine and holy life of the Lord Jesus Christ. Glory!
   5. A man had been born blind purely for the glory of God by Jesus Christ healing him (John 9:1-3).
   6. He had glorified His name in the resurrection of Lazarus from four days in the grave (John 11:4).

E. And God would further glorify His name in the death, resurrection, and glorification of Jesus Christ.
   1. Jesus glorified God's name in His death by perfect conduct on trial and on the cross (I Tim 6:13).
   2. God glorified His name through the death and resurrection of Christ (Is 52:10-12; I Tim 3:16).
   3. God glorified Himself by Pilate's wife's dream, the sign on the cross, and a humbled centurion!
   4. God glorified Himself by covering the sun, ripping the temple's veil, and sending an earthquake.
   5. God glorified Himself by raising His Son from the dead in spite of the efforts of His enemies.
   6. God glorified Himself by receiving Jesus Christ at His own right hand far above all authorities.
   7. God glorified Himself by the men Jesus Christ had chosen to preach the gospel to all the world.

F. Th glory of God and the glory of Christ are intertwined very closely together (John 17:1-5).

12:29 The people therefore, that stood by, and heard it, said that it thundered: others said, An angel spake to him.

A. As men are blind to the word of God to this day, they could not identify the voice as God's voice.

B. God spoke from heaven to answer the prayer of our Lord, but primarily to glorify Jesus to the crowd.

C. Whether it was a divine occurrence of thunder or the voice of an angel, it was supernatural!

D. But they had heard words from heaven addressing the Lord Jesus Christ in the context of His words.

12:30 Jesus answered and said, This voice came not because of me, but for your sakes.

A. God thundered from heaven not primarily for the comfort of Jesus, but to magnify Jesus Christ.

B. But did it do any good? No, it only further condemned that wicked generation for missing the Christ.

C. As Jesus said, they could discern the weather, but they could not identify the prophesied Son of God.

D. Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God, no matter how obvious (John 3:3).

E. Except a man be born again, he cannot hear the kingdom of God, no matter how obvious (Jn 8:47).

12:31 Now is the judgment of this world: now shall the prince of this world be cast out.

A. The hour Jesus dreaded, His death, would bring the judgment of the world and casting out of Satan.

B. The judgment of this world was the deliverance of many from the kingdom of darkness and Satan.

1. The judgment of the world cannot be anything related to the future Day of Judgment, which is to occur in the end of the world, long after Satan's binding and release (John 3:17; Rev 20:1-15).
2. By context it is clearly some aspect of His death and of the further judgment of the devil.
3. It was the judgment of the satanic kingdom of this world, which hated God and godliness, in the deliverance of the elect from it, and the sealing of its doom by its rejection of the Son of God.
4. It was at Jesus Christ's death that the deathblow was delivered to Satan's head, which freed His captives and allowed Jesus Christ to spoil the strong man's goods, saving His elect from sin.
5. The legal and practical work of delivering from Satan's palace occurred, but only for the elect (Matt 16:18; Luke 10:17-19; 11:18-22; Acts 26:16-18; Rom 8:33-39; I Cor 2:8; II Cor 4:3-4; Eph 2:1-3; Col 1:13; 2:15; Heb 2:14; I John 3:8; Rev 12:7-12; 20:1-3).
6. It was a judgment of discovery, in that the cross of Jesus Christ became the dividing legal event and dividing historical event between the elect of God and the children of the devil.
7. The world had long been under the dominion of Satan, committed to rebellion against its Creator, even seeking to seduce Christ to submission (Luke 4:5-7), but Jesus won it as His own!
8. Who would win between the seed of the woman and the serpent? Who had the right and rule over the earth and the sons of men? Jesus won the victory and was judged the Lord of all! Amen!

C. The casting out of Satan was his casting out of heaven to the earth, where he knows his time is short.

1. Satan was cast out of heaven, where he accused the elect (Job 1:6-11; Rev 12:7-12); but there is nothing now of which to accuse them, for God justified them in Jesus Christ (Rom 8:33).
2. Jesus Christ came to destroy the works of the devil on the cross (Col 2:15; Heb 2:14; I John 3:8), which He did by giving that great and fatal blow to his head that destroyed him and saved us!

12:32 And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me.

A. The lifting up from the earth is the manner in which He died by being suspended on a Roman cross.

B. Jesus had earlier compared His lifting up from the earth to the brass serpent of Moses (John 3:14).

1. Moses lifted up a brass serpent to deliver the people from God's fiery serpents (Num 21:6-9).
2. This was not an offer of life, because only those with life could look! Many were already dead!

C. Jesus had referred again to being lifted up as the event that would reveal His identity (John 8:28).

D. The death of Jesus Christ on the cross is the glorious event that draws all the elect of God to Christ.

1. There is no sense at all in which the death of Christ drew all men without exception to Him, for if no others can be identified, there were hordes of men already suffering in hell!
2. However, the death of Jesus provided the legal, vital, and practical basis of drawing men, for it was by this means alone that the new testament was put into force (Heb 9:15; 13:20; I Pet 1:2).
3. The death, resurrection, and coronation of Jesus Christ, called the preaching of the cross, was preached to Gentiles throughout the world, and many believed on Him (Matt 16:18; Rom 15:8-29; I

Cor 1:18,22-24; 2:1-5; II Cor 2:14-17; 4:3-4; Acts 1:8; 26:16-18; I Tim 3:16).

4. The “all men” here are all kinds of men, particularly Gentiles, from the ancient prophecy (Gen 49:10), the context of the work of the Good Shepherd (John 10:16), the context of the prophecy of Caiaphas (John 11:49-52), and the immediate context of Greeks seeking Him (12:20-21).
5. He had taught earlier that all the Father had given Him would come to Him (Jn 6:38-40,44,65).
6. It was His assignment to gather together into the one family of God all the elect of God (John 6:38-39; 17:2; Eph 1:10; 2:13-18; 3:14-15; Col 1:20; Heb 12:22-24; Rev 5:9-14; 7:9-17).
7. The “all men” here is comparable to “the world” of 12:19. Rather than ignorantly saying, “All means all, and that’s all all means,” we know “all” is usually limited by context. Let these Bible idiots defend Paul as a sodomite (I Cor 9:22) or Adam as chasing filthy lucre (I Tim 6:10).
8. The “all men” here are the Greeks in context and other Gentiles, which were drawn further to Christ after His resurrection, which is a component part of the mystery of godliness (I Tim 3:16).

12:33 This he said, signifying what death he should die.

A. The previous verse has the mode of death in view, for Romans lifted men up on trees by crucifixion.

B. Here is a fulfillment of prophecy as well, for the Jews did not kill in such a way (John 18:28-32).

12:34 The people answered him, We have heard out of the law that Christ abideth for ever: and how sayest thou, The Son of man must be lifted up? who is this Son of man?

A. Here is a place that teaches us to understand the law of God to extend beyond the books of Moses, for the prophecies of Messiah and His kingdom enduring forever are in the psalms and prophets.

B. Ever ignorant and stubborn, the people can only think of the carnal aspects of prophecies of Christ, which spoke of His kingdom as enduring forever (Ps 45:6; 89:36-37; 110:4; Dan 2:44; 7:13-14).

C. They did not understand what Jesus meant by describing Messiah’s death by being lifted up; they did understand that lifting up was an expression for death, but they did not grasp Messiah’s death.

D. They either had rejected the other prophecies of Christ’s death or could not reconcile them with their carnal notions as to Him and His kingdom (Is 53:1-12; Dan 9:24-27).

E. The mysteries of the incarnation and resurrection of Jesus Christ kept these things from their minds.

F. They did not understand that Jesus, Who had just raised Lazarus and been addressed from heaven, was the Christ, the Messiah of God. They were in dark ignorance of what was happening in Israel.

G. And Jesus did not answer them directly, but warned them of the danger of being left in darkness.

12:35 Then Jesus said unto them, Yet a little while is the light with you. Walk while ye have the light, lest darkness come upon you: for he that walketh in darkness knoweth not whither he goeth.

A. Jesus Christ is the Light of the world, in that He is the only source of God’s truth and wisdom.

B. If men did not take advantage of the Light while it was available, they would end up in darkness.

C. And the nation at large was left in darkness; they did not know what they did in crucifying Jesus; and the

Romans came and destroyed them in their ignorance, though He had told them of it!

D. Let every reader consider, "Seek ye the LORD while He may be found, call ye upon Him while He is near" (Is 55:6). It is the holy God's prerogative to turn away from begging men (Prov 1:20-33).

12:36 While ye have light, believe in the light, that ye may be the children of light. These things spake Jesus, and departed, and did hide himself from them.

A. If you want to lay hold of the Light and prove yourself His child, believe in the light of Jesus Christ.

B. Faith in Christ is not the means of regeneration any more than loving your enemies (Matt 5:45).

C. Paul presses this duty further for the saints at Ephesus by exhorting them to walk (Eph 5:8-17).

D. Then Jesus departed and hid Himself from them, for they had not believed in His glorious light.

Conclusion:

1. Jesus Christ sought the glory of God above anything else, even if it meant He had to die (12:23,27-28).
2. He promised eternal life with Him in heaven for those who would hate their lives in this world (12:25-26).
3. The blessed God was most glorified in the life, death, and glorification of the Lord Jesus Christ (12:28).
4. The glory of God and the glory of Jesus Christ are closely intertwined by the divine plan of God (17:1-5).
5. He was lifted up from the earth on the cross, and He did it to draw you and me to Him for heaven (12:32).

For Further Study:

A. The sermon outline, "The Stronger Man," which deals with Jesus Christ's victory over the devil for the elect.